



McFarlane was recently named acting associate laboratory director for INL's Nuclear Science and Technology Directorate.

## McFarlane returns from D.C. assignment, takes on new NS&T role

By [Cathy Koon](#) for *INL Communications & Governmental Affairs*

Dealing with nuclear issues on an international scale is nothing new for Dr. Harold McFarlane. As deputy associate laboratory director at [Idaho National Laboratory](#), McFarlane's primary responsibility was representing the lab in international nuclear energy cooperation.

His numerous technical leadership positions gave him responsibility for developing advanced systems for nuclear power plants, the nuclear fuel cycle, and space nuclear power for science and exploration. His knowledge and reputation led to a one-year assignment in Washington, D.C., as the senior technical adviser to the [U.S. Department of Energy's](#) assistant secretary for nuclear energy.

McFarlane returned to INL the first week of August, accepted a special award and assumed a new interim position, all in the space of his normal workweek. He has been named acting associate laboratory director for nuclear science and technology while an international search is launched to find a permanent successor for Phillip Finck, who assumed a new position Aug. 8 as chief nuclear research officer in the lab director's office.

The special award was an Exceptional Service Award from the DOE in recognition of his "outstanding performance . . . in support of the Office of Nuclear Energy in 2010 and 2011," the year he spent in Washington.

"During his tenure at the Office of Nuclear Energy Headquarters, Harold was instrumental in bringing a laboratory perspective to the Nuclear Energy programs, and provided broad technical insight on a variety of matters. His work on the Fukushima response effort, the Generation IV Experts Group and other activities was instrumental in furthering the implementation initiatives and significantly contributed to the overall objectives of the office," according to the award citation signed by Peter Lyons, assistant secretary for nuclear energy.

The award was presented to McFarlane at a luncheon in Washington on Aug. 1 just before his return to Idaho.

McFarlane says the highlight of his year in D.C. was helping coordinate the national laboratories' support of the Office of Nuclear Energy's role in the Fukushima emergency.

"It is something we will always remember," he said of the team effort. McFarlane never actually traveled to Japan, but managed government agencies that were responding, trying to keep abreast of the situation and providing information to the U.S. ambassador. He worked with the secretary of energy and president's science adviser, and "a cadre of experts, many of whom had worked with Secretary Chu on the Macondo oil spill in the Gulf."

He worked with the best severe accident experts from all of the nuclear labs, coordinating the work, making daily reports and answering questions as part of the government's crisis response, assembling data and anticipating what might happen in the future.

While traveling in India last February, Laboratory Director John Grossenbacher and McFarlane worked to further the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Energy Agreement. Their efforts paid off with a successful joint working group meeting at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in July.

While assigned to Washington, he continued his work with the Generation IV International Forum. He is the technical director of the forum, which is a framework for development of advanced nuclear power plants worldwide.

McFarlane started his career in Idaho in 1972 at Argonne National Laboratory-West. He has a doctoral degree in engineering science from the [California Institute of Technology](#), a bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Texas and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Chicago. He is a past president and a fellow of the American Nuclear Society, and immediate past chairman of the [International Nuclear Energy Academy](#).

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***McFarlane is the recipient of an Exceptional Service Award from DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy in recognition of his outstanding performance.***